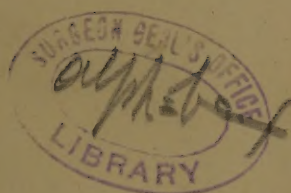


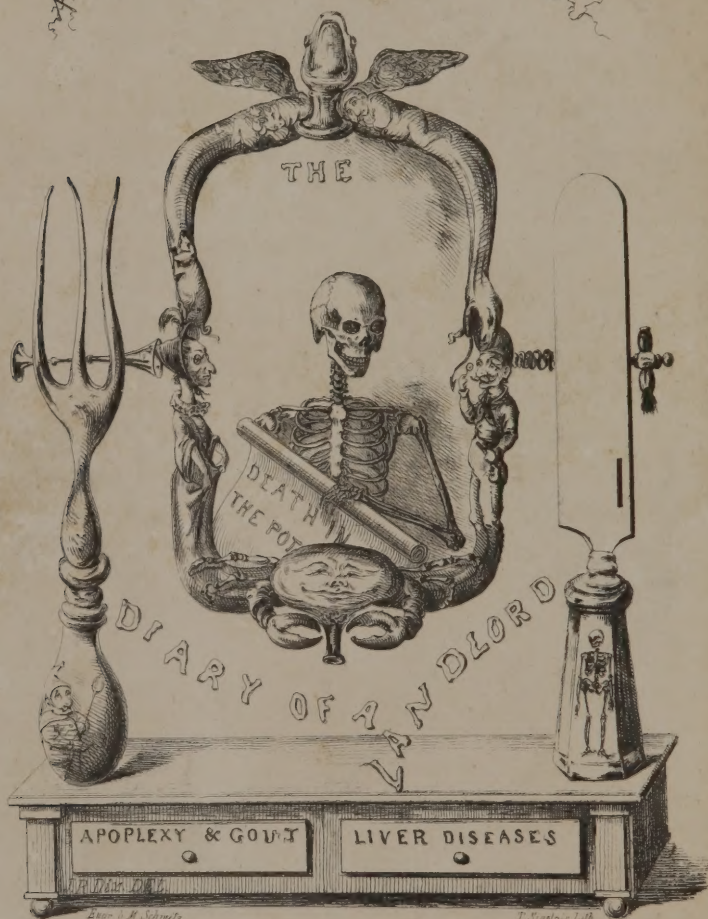
SANDERSON (J. M.)

mirror for dyspeptics

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A MIRROR for DYSPEPTICS  
FROM



*Sanderson J. M.*

MIRROR FOR DYSPEPTICS;

FROM THE

DIARY OF A LANDLORD.

BY J. M. SANDERSON,

FRANKLIN HOUSE.

---

As you have an eye upon my follies,  
As you hear them unfolded, turn  
Another to the register of your own.  
SHAKSPEARE.

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## TO THE READER.

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“The Bookseller says he wants a Preface, and that the book cannot be a book without one.” With this message before us, and in order to comply with the wishes of our worthy publisher, we sat down and asked ourself what is to be said? Were these essays prepared for the purpose of instructing the public, or were they written with a view to their amusement, or for the purpose of showing our ability to cater for the mind as well as the body? The answer that presented itself, with a kind of involuntary emphasis, was no. Yet knowing the sympathy between these auxiliaries to our comfort and our existence, and after considering the *devouring* propensity of the one, and the ignorance in relation to the aliment of the other, we did flatter ourself in being able to concoct something that might be palatable to the epicures, if not to the literary gourmands of the day. The tales (not “ox tails” or “pigs’ tails,”) that have recently excluded the scientific aliment from our tables, we knew, like our dinners, are swallowed without mastication, and in the hope of directing the public mind to the necessity of reform, we compiled the following pages, and, in the general deluge, hoped they might be swallowed with the rest. How they will be received—what good may be effected by them, or whether they may be considered worth the perusal, is for the reader to determine. Our experience has instructed us that every man has his taste, and Carème has told us that “he who loves acid will not take that between sweet

and sour. Those who love bitter, will not relish those things that are sweet. Dishes lightly seasoned will not please those who love them highly flavored and well seasoned, but moderately seasoned dishes are the compositions of science, and the taste and flavor are relished by the lovers of gastronomy." We therefore give this as our preface, and hope the reader, if we have not been able to accomplish it, will treat the subject with the serious importance it deserves.

# DIARY OF A LANDLORD.

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## CHAPTER I.

“The wise man eats with his brain, the fool with his mouth.”

To the truth of the above saying, we are reluctantly obliged to give our evidence, and to direct the reader to the many faces in which he will see it written. The science of cooking being little understood, and the disposition of most people to appear learned in matters upon which they know the world to be ignorant, is unfortunately the chief cause of the dyspeptic and mahogany faces that so numerous crowd our streets. The influence of the few, whose minds upon all subjects are more suggestive than comprehensive—who take upon themselves the thinking of the community, is decidedly against gastronomical science, and like the inventor of deadly engines, nine times out of ten, they become the victims of their own doctrines. In their cry against eating, and the productions of the scientific cook, they forget that the stomach is the main-spring of health, and however languid the machinery of life may vibrate, they stubbornly adhere to their notions, and direct their followers to the impalatable stews of the “plain cook” to keep the whole in motion. But we have discovered that the stomach, which receives and performs its functions to-day, may be palled on the morrow, and he that is indifferent to the cause, or neglects the remedies in his power, must not complain at the effects of his indiscretion. It is frequently from slight causes that the greatest evils arise. It was the hair that broke the camel’s back, and it is a pity, in this enlightened age, that the mouth, that is so particularly interested in the preservation of the body, should destroy the engine that keeps it in motion. But the facts are every day presented to us, and we have come to the conclusion to place them on record, and to believe that the science of the cook is as necessary to the preservation of health, as the skill of the physician.

The man then, for women are seldom guilty of such absurdities, “who eats with his mouth”—who bolts, and requires the stomach to perform the operations of his teeth, may boast for a time of his indifference to the science of cooking. He may say that “he troubles not his mind with what he eats”—that “he is no epicure—no gour-



mand—no lover of French cookery”—that “the whole matter of eating and drinking, with many other ridiculous things, is beneath the dignity of the human mind,” and yet he may find out, in spite of the condition of his intellectual wardrobe—in the prime of his life, that he has mistaken and abused one of the most sympathizing and disinterested contributors to his existence. The passions, according to our notion, which are the engine that keep the mind in action, and necessary to the protection and preservation of health, he will discover, have been neglected and abused; and when the time comes for the inquiry into the cause, he will find that the engineer is alone responsible for the neglect, and not the man who supplied the fuel. He may also discover, for he will have plenty of time to grin over and contemplate the past scenes of his life; that nature cannot be violated, or disturbed with impunity—that crude and indigestible matter is not the aliment for a robust frame, nor is “*plain cooking*”—that is soaking meats in hot water, frying in rancid butter, and seasoning with all the spices of Arabia—the proper ingredients for a healthy stomach.

But it is not our intention to present a *critique* upon the science of cooking, or to lay down rules for the prudent and cautious eater, but to point out a few of the “absurdities that have got into the world,” and, as Dr. Johnson says, “the difficulty of getting them out of it.” The lessons we derive from our own follies, enable us to watch and look a little into the imprudence of others; but without having the power to correct abuses, we only presume upon admonitory hints, and, if possible, to show that the science of cooking should form a part of our elementary instruction. We have professors in almost every science—from the President of the Academy down to the Lecturer on Temperance. We have Professor Gouraud upon Memory, notwithstanding our numerous and many good reasons for forgetting the scenes and follies of the past; and Professor Somebody-else on Politics, but no professor on Cookery. “God sends meats but the devil sends cooks,” is the almost universal proverb of the world, and in this country, where the principle is so brilliantly illustrated, we can readily trace the bilious, the dyspeptic, and the numerous diseases to which we are subject. Davis, who is good authority upon this subject, says, “that more bodies are consumed and killed by bad cooks, than with the sword, famine, or pestilence.” We believe, also, in another old saying, “that the cook sends more to their account than the physician;” and we remember Dr. Physick telling a dyspeptic patient, “that the more he charred his *toast* and *meats*, the longer they would last in his stomach,” and that “the abominable custom of boiling completely destroyed every article of flesh cooked in that way.”

The science, therefore, of the cook, says Father Brumoy, “consists in decomposing, in rendering easy of digestion, in quintessencing the viands, in extracting from their light and nourishing juices, and in so mixing them together, that no one flavor shall predominate, but that all shall be harmonized and blended.” He also says, “a perfect cook should exactly understand the properties of the substances he



employs, that he may correct or render more perfect such aliments as nature presents in a raw state. He should have a sound head, a sure taste and a delicate palate, that he may cleverly combine the ingredients. Seasoning is the rock of indifferent cooking." Carême also, whose authority is quite as good, and whose works are the textbooks of every country, says, "his head should be strong, quick, productive. He should be tempered to command, active and animated, with an invincible ardor for labor. At the signal for serving dinner, he should be, beyond expression, a man of *ensemble*, of direction, enthusiastic, and attentive, even to trifles; vigilant, he should see every thing, and know every thing. A *maitre d'hotel* is never ill, never! From three o'clock he is everywhere present; he operates everywhere by a powerful compulsion; he alone has the right to raise his voice, and every one should bend to him."

With such authority and with such qualifications, how is it possible to prepare a dinner with such cooks as abound throughout our country? or, how is it possible, having such cooks, to appreciate a dinner prepared by a cook with the qualifications laid down by such distinguished writers? With these facts staring us in the face, and with the ignorance which so generally prevails, is it any wonder that the people of the country eat more with their mouths than they do with their minds? or is it at all astonishing that we are so afflicted with the diseases that are alone found in this country? If eating is necessary to the prolongation of life, why not pause and consider the quality of the material we consume? Why select and intrust the most ignorant of our species with the preparation of our food? Why devour it as though we were cannibals, and then charge the destruction of our constitution to the climate, the physician, or to any unknown cause? But as Swift reminds us "that it is idle to complain before we are attacked with disease, or to be in pain before we are convinced of the danger," we will only admonish our friends to be careful of what they eat, to look to their cooks, and never "thank God for a dinner that has been spoiled in the cooking." We are aware that Dr. Franklin has said that he "never recollected what he had eaten the day before," and we are also aware, that no man selected with more care the particles he put in his stomach. At the age of seventy, he "thanked his God that he had but *three* incurable diseases," and if he had not been cautious, we have our doubts whether he would have lived to that age, to be tortured or troubled with them. His mind therefore, if it was not engaged with what he ate, was particularly directed to the *quality* and to the *manner* in which it was cooked.

But from the observations we have been enabled to make, we have discovered that the science of eating is as little understood as that of cooking, and where our subject is so completely surrounded by ignorance, we will give a few examples that have presented themselves in the course of our business. The system upon which our establishment is conducted, brings before us the better class of the community, and of course our eyes are open to the various tastes and notions that every day present themselves. The stout, athletic man,

with youth, health and enterprise marked on every feature, is perhaps the one who thinks least of what he eats. His orders are more generally directed to the haste with which the supply can be furnished, than to the article he wishes to devour. Instead of running his eye over the bill of fare, for the purpose of selecting what might be called a rational dish, or at least a stomachical compound that might agree with the delicate organs of digestion, he sings out in a clear and positive voice, "Waiter—bring me a bowl of turtle soup—some salmon, and a *glass of milk*!" and "jist in no time at all" the whole disappears, and another succeeds, who is more particular about the quantity and price, than he is about the quality or the cooking. Then comes a sedentary recluse—an editor for instance, who seeks a *piquant* dish to rouse the morbid action of the stomach, that has yielded to the peculiar labor of the mind. He is in search of "something delicate," and after reading the bill of fare from end to end, contents himself with "rice milk and boiled rock fish!" This gentleman is again succeeded by the epicure who lives upon lamb-chops, sweetbreads, fricassées, lobsters, calves' heads, whipped cream and omelet-soufflés. Following, we have the exquisite who is *delighted*, or rather would be, with butterfly-broth, humming-birds with persimmon sauce, linnets' heads, quintessences of May-bugs, and such like trifles. Then, again, the dyspeptic—the gentleman who "went it while he was young,"—who "never thought of what he eat"—who "was no gourmand," and "hated French cooking," but now seeking "soup maigre," mutton-chops au naturel, with bran bread and soda crackers. These, with the business men, who eat and drink to live, and never die until their time comes, but many, at the meridian of life, leave off business to nurse a shattered constitution, make up what is called the business of the morning. But when the sun has drawn his rays towards the cooling zephyrs of the west, we have a new field open, and new theories presented for discussion. We have the men "who eat with the mind," and seek only the "feast of reason and the flow of soul." With a prudent and well selected dinner, they sit and enjoy the conversation that is at all times refreshing to the intelligent and well informed man. Indeed it is said by a writer in one of the reviews, that "such dinners have done more to advance the progress of the human mind, than the labors of all the sordid, speculating, book-making academies." Addison has also said, "when men are thus knit together, by a love of society, not a spirit of faction, and do not meet to censure or annoy those that are absent, but to enjoy one another; when they are thus combined for their own improvement, or for the good of others, or at least to relax themselves from the business of the day, by an innocent and cheerful conversation, there may be something very useful in these little institutions and establishments." In another corner we have the gourmand, who know how to order—who know how to eat, and who know how to appreciate a dinner when it comes before them. With their palates schooled and trained to the nicest appreciation of what is coming, they sit down to the following bill, where the articles are brought and discussed in the order in which they stand. They be-



lieve that all the nobler functions of the soul should be present during every mouthful, and from the sympathy between the mind and the stomach, they regard the business of eating as much a mental as a physical task :

—CARTE—

*Potage de purée de Gibier.*

*Basse rayée à la Chambord, garnie de quenelles de poisson, rog-nons et crêtes de coq, et timballes de truffes, cham-pignons et financière.*

*Côtelettes d'Agneau, piquées aux petits pois.*

*Epigramme de ris de veau, à la sauce tomate.*

*Aiguillettes de Canards Sauvages à la Périgieux.*

*Sauté de Perdrix au Suprême.*

*Terrines de filets de Lièvre, à la Bellevue.*

*Chapon truffée.*

*Macédoine de Légumes.*

*Epinards à la crème.*

*Beignets de Blancmanger.*

*Soufflée de fécule de pommes de terre.*

*Bombe glacée au Curaçao.*

*Gelée d' Oranges, renversée.*

*Apples, Grapes, Raisins, Oranges, Almonds.*

*Café Moka, et Toste d' Anchois.*

With such a dinner, Bonaparte has said he "would accomplish more fortunate treaties—more happy arrangements or reconciliations, than through the whole crowd of diplomatic nonentities that throng the anti-chambers of the Tuileries," and we say that with such a dinner, we would defy any thing but the gout to disturb the equanimity of our temper.

In another room we have the "good eaters"—the gentlemen who live to eat and drink, and who of course are as familiar with the vocabulary of the cook—with the various delicacies of the season—with the variety and actual condition of the market, as the merchant with the prices of stocks—the fluctuations of produce, or the more intricate science of the multiplication table. Their study, if they study any thing, is the science of the *cuisine*, and they eat, "not as a horse bolts his chopped hay," but with that intellectual *gusto* which seems to say—"Well, this is worth living for!" But upon scanning the bill of fare, a "roast pig"—a "dear little pig,"—or, as Charles Lamb says, "a youngling, that is scarcely a month old, well watched in the cooking, crisp, not over-roasted in the crackling, as it is well called—the very teeth are invited to the share of the pleasure in overcoming the coy—brittle resistance—with the adhesive oleaginous—oh, call it not fat!—but an indefinable sweetness—growing up to it—the tender blossoming of fat—fat cropped in the bud—taken in the shoot—in the first innocence—the cream and quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food—the lean, no lean, but a kind of *animal manna*—or, rather, fat and lean (if it must be so,) so blended and so running into each other, that both together make but one



ambrosian result, or common substance." If such a delicacy should happen to strike the eye, it is "good bye" to the fricassées, fricandeaus, Rabbits, Pheasants, Canvass-back Ducks, Partridges, Snipes, Woodcock, Barn-door Fowls, Capons, Plover and the whole catalogue of the feathered tribe. A Roast Pig!—none of your shoats, "stuffed with plantations of guilty garlick;" but a "Roast Pig, with a few bread crumbs, done up with his liver and brains, and a dash of sage," is enough to make a Mussulman forswear his religion, or to call back Father Brumoy from his sainted sepulchre—

"Back to the world he'd turn his weary soul,  
To taste a pig so roasted on the coal."

But, as we said before, it is not our object to point out the delights of eating, but merely to exhibit the extremes, to let the world see what mischief may be accomplished by a stupid adherence to prejudices and passions. The man who destroys his health by depriving himself of the time and attention to what, and how he eats, is to our mind worse than the one who accomplishes the object in luxury and enjoyment. The parsimony, in the one instance, is certainly more culpable than the liberal example of the other, and if we could direct our minds to the "Feast of Reason," we would discover not only the true pleasure, but the great utility of "eating with our minds." It is the harmony of the picture that strikes the eye, and brings to the mind its beauties. So, in eating, the eternal fitness of every thing is apparent. The article—the sauce—the condiments—the stomach and the mind must harmonize, and in that harmony the health is preserved, the body refreshed, and the mind purified and enlightened by the enjoyment. Pope says :

Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,  
Lie in three words—Health, Peace and Competence;  
But Health consists with Temperance alone;  
And Peace, oh, Virtue ! Peace is all thy own.

## CHAPTER II.

"Lights and colors come in only by the eyes; all kinds of sounds only by the ears; but the several *tastes* and *smells* by the *nose* and *palate*."

It has long been to us a matter of astonishment, why one portion of the world should set their affections upon an object, that was disgustingly offensive to another. But upon further reflection we discover that *tastes* are acquired, and that by a singular devotion to custom, we become not only reconciled to, but affectionately fond of things that were hateful in the beginning. Water, which is so generally beloved by the world—so necessary to our comfort, our health, and even to our existence, and so particularly eulogized by our Physicians, our Clergymen, and our Temperance Lecturers, is not at first relished by the babe :—yet custom modifies the *taste*, and nature renders it an element of life. Even "the soul," says Bulwer, "becomes accustomed to the mill, and follows the track mechanically, which it commenced in disgust." In the eating department, we are alike the children of custom—and our *tastes* are settled by

long and persevering attention to the habits of others. Pork and molasses, the favorite dish of our primitive ancestors, is regarded by some as extremely vulgar, while others, clinging perhaps to the ancient customs of the Puritans, and forgetting the more recent discovery of *currant jelly*, adhere to it, and, in spite of the modern improvements in cookery, insist upon it as a savory dish. But custom, as we said before, makes many things palatable, and we are rather inclined to indulge and encourage the adherents than condemn them; and when we have the example of the ancients for many of our virtues, we must not be regarded as singular for keeping alive and perpetuating their follies. The Romans believed that the flesh of the Hare, taken by a lady for six days, would make her beautiful, and yet we know some modern ladies that would place in defiance all the Hares in christendom. They also regarded Goats' flesh, with asafœtida sauce, as a great delicacy; and young puppies, among the gourmands, were held in high estimation. The Chinese, also, are fond of dogs' flesh, and in some parts of Africa, the rattle-snake and boa-constrictor are considered delicious. Locusts are eaten in Asia; and on the coast of Guinea, lizards, mice, rats, snakes, caterpillars, and worms are considered a nice relish on the tables of the rich.

But our astonishment is not so much excited by the peculiar taste of individuals, as at the inconsiderate and destructive habit of *bolting* and throwing into the stomach large quantities of unchewed and indigestible matter. This custom, which prevails throughout the country, seems to us a habit that is controlled and governed by various circumstances. On board the steamboats—at the refreshment houses on the railways—at the accommodation houses on post roads, and at most of the hotels, where every thing is placed upon the table—where the delicacies are always grasped by the knowing ones, and where there is not a supply of waiters, this custom becomes necessary, and finally grows into a habit that breaks up the constitution before it is cured in the party. Another excuse is presented by the man of business, that time is precious and cannot be recalled:—that he “cannot make a god of his belly,” when matters of *importance* are resting on the mind, and that indulgence in eating was intended only for the glutton, or for those whose lives were devoted to the enjoyment of the table; yet this self-same gentleman will eat a dinner in *ten minutes*, and, under the hypnotic influence of a *Principe*, rest and luxuriate for an hour. But in the contemplation of these, to us, excesses, we have not entirely made up our mind to their destructive influence—

“The wise for health on *exercise* depend;  
God never made his work for man to mend;”

and consequently, we are sometimes disposed to believe in the gymnastic influences of eating. If the stomach is able to digest the heterogeneous mass that is so unceremoniously thrown in, there can be no doubt of the advantages attained by the *exercise*. Claudius Albinus, commander of the Romans in Gaul, ate, at one sitting, 10 capons, 100 snipe, 150 large oysters, 500 figs, 100 peaches, 10 melons, and

20 lbs raisins ; and, if we believe the history in which this important fact is recorded, it must have been the *exercise* in eating that sustained him, and procured for him the important office he filled. But we have other Romans alike distinguished, and alike indebted to the influence of some such amusement, for the notoriety they have achieved. Besides, we have some Athenians of extraordinary appetite, who could not have attained their celebrity from their powers of digestion. Theagenes ate a whole bull at a sitting. Theodorus Heropolitanus devoured 20 lbs of flesh, 20 pounds of bread, and drank three gallons of wine at one sitting ; and a lady, named Aglaise, ate 12 lbs. of flesh, 4 semeirandi of bread, and drank one gallon of wine at one sitting. We have also, from ancient history, the evidence of the importance of these people, and of the luxury and style in which they lived. We have the story of Caligula, who spent, on a single supper, \$358,700 ! of Claudius, of Nero, and of the inconceivable gluttony of Vitellius. Seneca tells the story of a man named Gabius, who spent, on his table, 60,000,000 *sestertii*, or upwards of \$2,000,000 ; and of his destroying himself, from a fear that he would die of hunger—having but ten millions *sestertii*, upwards of \$350,000, remaining. These facts, although somewhat opposed to our position, are nevertheless in favor of our doctrine, that a good cook is every thing to our health, and absolutely necessary to the comfort and preservation of our lives. The ten capons, the one hundred snipes, the whole bull, and the delicate feast of “the lady,” that by this time has so astonished the reader, is perfectly within our comprehension : and from the following extract, from the “*Physiologie du Gout*,” we hope to make it alike conceivable to our astonished and most excellent reader.

“The Prince Soubise had, on one occasion, intended to give a fête, which was to be followed by a supper, of which he asked for the *menu*. The *maitre d’hotel* presented himself with a handsome vignettéd bill of fare,—and the first article on which the prince cast his eyes, was fifty hams. ‘What, Bertrand,’ said the prince, ‘you surely are not in earnest ? Fifty hams ! Do you wish then to treat my whole regiment ?’ ‘No, *mon prince*, only one of those hams will appear on the table ; but the other forty-nine are not the less necessary for flavoring, whitening, garnishing,’ &c., &c. ‘Bertrand, you rob me, and this article shall not pass.’ ‘Ah, Monseigneur,’ said the artist, with difficulty choking his rising choler, ‘you do not know our resources. You have but to order, and these *fifty hams*, which now so much annoy you, *shall be dissolved into a crystal vial not bigger than my thumb !*’ The prince laughed, signified assent, by a nod of the head, and the charge for the fifty hams passed muster.”

But it is not necessary to travel back to the shades of antiquity, for evidence to prove the importance of cooking and eating. We have Abernethy, Kitchener, Walker, Armstrong, Physick, and our own dear doctors, who are physicking us every day, imploring us to be careful of what we eat, and eternally cautioning us against excesses—Kitchener says “more men dig their graves with their *teeth*, than



with the *tankard*. Drunkenness is deplorably destructive, but her demurer sister, Gluttony, destroys an hundred to her one." The others are alike impressive in their admonitions, and insist upon it that every thing must be cooked before entering the stomach. All the writers, both ancient and modern, agree that "it is suicide to waste the valuable energies of the stomach in a work which a spit or a stew-pan can do better." Armstrong says:

The stomach, urg'd beyond its active tone,  
Hardly to nutrimental chyle subdueds  
The softest food.

And Gay says:

Nor love, nor honor, wealth, nor power,  
Can give the heart a cheerful hour  
When health is lost. Be timely wise;  
With health all taste of pleasure flies.

The *taste* then which is regulated by the *nose* and the *palate* is not, according to modern custom, the plan upon which the life may be prolonged—nor does it appear to us, that these "incorruptible Castilians" are entirely free from the influence of a bribe. We find the emunctuary protuberance of the face frequently under the influence of aromatics, while the other sentinel is indulging in the piquant and pectoral qualities of spice. Thus, the fortification is frequently sacrificed to the caprice, or infidelity of its agents, and of course the general is not to blame, however he may suffer, by the patriotism of those in whom he confides. The modern excuse for the errors of a man in office, is the bare performance of what he knows; and it is only in the pursuit of office that we feel ourselves qualified for its various contingencies. But we have made the discovery that patriotism and virtue are subjects to be talked about, but not on all occasions to be carried into practice. In relation to the *palate*, although extremely nice in its way, we know it is not always able to control what passes *into* and *out* of the mouth; and that it is frequently obliged to share with the *nose* things that are extremely disagreeable and unpleasant.

We have also discovered, from experience of course, that the road to men's affections, as well as their tastes, is not through the mind, and have been obliged to take the railroad in the other direction, and, if possible, bury our disappointments and prejudices in the rapidity of motion. We have found there is no such thing as resisting the current of prejudice; and as nature, in the abstract, is not always in a condition to be looked at, it is not policy to be too critical upon objects that pass under our *nose*. In the world, there are a great many things like our wives, we must take for better, or for worse, and content ourselves with "*extracting, quintessencing*, and in making them *palatable*." "The various and contrary choices that men make," says Locke, "argue that the same thing is not good to every man alike," and if it were not for the variety of the sun's rays, we would probably have but one color, which, as the printers say, would throw the moral and physical world into *pi*. The various questions which have so long agitated the community, would, upon this principle, receive a check, and Texas would be admitted into the Union

without a dissenting vote. The ladies also, who are generally in favor of annexation, would be unable to make the display which so captivates our affections, and the politicians and temperance men would be so "*battered*" and "*squabbled*" that the "*devil*" himself would be unable to extricate them from the "*monks*" and "*friars*" that are "*distributed*" throughout the "*Union*." We therefore find the appetites, not the propensities of men, the safest road to travel upon, and if we cannot exactly suit the palates of the age in an "*Epic*" we can give them an "*Epigram*" which will not be unpleasant to the *taste*.

But upon leaving our former occupation which kept our mind in fretful ferment, and upon the adoption of our present profession, we started, like many others, blindfold on the way to fortune. Whether our eyes are open, or whether we are still on the track, is not our purpose to inquire. We only know that our engine has continued in a straight forward course, and if we have not been able to contribute to the happiness of others, we have not intentionally injured them by neglect, or a misapprehension of our "*power*." The balance wheel has not been suffered to rust, nor have the hairs that, in spite of our youthful vanity, become gray in the service, destroyed the hopes of reaching the goal in the future. But upon separating from our old friends, which we did with reluctance, we left the politicians to *split* hairs upon the theoretical absurdities of the day, the merchants, to estimate their probable success upon the contingencies of a whirlwind, and the lawyers, the doctors and the preachers, to discuss, dissect and elevate the morals of the people. How these matters have been attended to during the last eight years is history, and to those whose *appetites* incline them that way, it may be written. We have nothing in the recollection that is *savory*. Nothing that would be considered sprightly or *refreshing*—nothing that physicians would call *digestible*, or *palatable* to ourself or friends.

"'Tis not such Salutary food  
As suits with every Stomach;"—

and from our own experience, as well as from the authority of Kitchen, we have learned that "the functions of digestion go on merrily when exercised by *aliment* which the stomach asks for,"—and it is "during the distressing suspension of the restorative process, that all those miseries of mind and body arise, which drive fools to get drunk and make madmen hang themselves." To supply the remedies for such evils, is then the secret of our present vocation, and if we can induce our friends to think upon the subject—to look into the authorities for preserving health, we think the life may be prolonged, and no doubt the happiness promoted. Dr. Johnson says, "for my part I mind my belly very studiously and very carefully ;—for I look upon it that he who does not mind his belly will hardly mind any thing else,"—and if we stop any man in the street whose age approaches that, when Johnson made the remark, he will answer nearly in the same words. But should it hereafter become necessary for us to *split hares* for the politicians, we hope, by the application of

the proper *sauce*, to make them palatable. Our "Tippecanoe broth," which was once so desirable, but more recently supposed to have been seasoned with "Virginia abstractions," we think by changing the *spices* and substituting the "*Cider* of New Jersey" for the "*Crab* of Virginia," it may be restored to favor; but as there is no annexation in the *Clay* of Kentucky, we cannot say how far it will be *relished* by the opposite party. Our *Tariff*, which has been "adjusted solely for the purpose of *revenue*," is entirely free from the objections of the manufacturer. In the South it has met the approbation of all parties, and by the "universal Yankee nation" of the North, its *provisions* are alike respected. For the lawyers, the doctors and the clergy, we have *bills* which will *suit* their palates—subjects which will test their gastronomical skill, and matters which may be *converted* to the most useful purpose. Indeed it is our intention to bring all to the *Bar*, where they may be "judged according to their works." In the execution of these several duties, we find our path strewn with a multiplicity of tastes, and many, very many appetites to be gratified.

But in the progress of our business it is not our intention to meddle with the *taste* which is regulated by the *eye*—we shall only use that delicate organ to see that things are properly done. With that which presents itself to the ear, we will endeavor to be alike cautious, and after the example of our illustrious cotemporaries, give most attention to the object that promotes the interest or flatters the vanity. Our immediate business is particularly connected with the *nose* and the *palate*, and as Hudibras says,

It is plain enough to him that knows,  
How *saints* lead *brothers* by the *nose*,

we will leave the discussion of *taste*, generally, to those who consider themselves master of the subject. We have no disposition to fit out a vessel for the discovery of new worlds, nor yet subscribe to a steamboat. It is only our province to look at the matter that passes in, instead of the *impalatable* and *indigestible* stuff that comes out of the mouth. It is particularly the business of the prudent merchant to regulate the imports by the stock of goods on hand.

As our object then is to prove that eating is necessary to our existence—that it cannot be done by deputy—that it is an amusement that contributes more than any thing else to our happiness, and that the protection of our health is the most serious, and should be the most important consideration of our lives, we shall endeavor to show that the organs of digestion should be protected from the *wear* and *tear* to which they are unnecessarily exposed. The professional men of the country—the gentlemen, who from the nature of their professional duties, and of course confined to sedentary habits, are every day presenting themselves with faces drawn up like the mouth of a meal bag, seeking something to sustain a broken constitution; and when the question occurs as to the cause of the dilapidation, it turns out that they have been living upon the impalpable compost of the "plain cook," or the food of the laborer who tills the ground,



or *mauls* the rails to enclose it. The mill stone, although familiar with its duties, it has never occurred to them, wears out in the progress of time, and if the stomach is exposed to the same digestive process—to the grinding of the coarse, unchewed, uncooked, and indigestible matter which is every day thrown into it, we cannot, or ought not, to complain of its weakness, when we are only in the meridian of life. A little thing will sometimes promote or prevent the greatest evil, and if we look at the various contingencies of life, we will see how much is gained by minutely looking into our condition. By a single dish we may destroy our health—by a single meal we may injure our stomach, and by a single drop of Prussic acid, we may take the life that is beyond our power to restore.

In looking, therefore, over the reasons which prompt us to the consideration of these matters, we feel bound to state that the excesses of our youth are beginning to trouble us, and that we cannot approach the recital with the natural boldness that indicates a clear and undisturbed conscience.

When we contemplate the quantity of half chewed meat—the pounds of fiery spices, to make it palatable—the kegs of hog's lard and rancid butter, and the crude and indigestible matter we have forced into our unoffending stomach, we recognize our errors with the most penitent humility. But we regret to say that repentance does not restore the morbid action, nor bring into active energy the abused organs of our existence. Time makes manifest many things that were hidden, and we find him an invincible reasoner;—no sophistry can refute his arguments, no authority can resist his laws, and to his tribunal must we all come at last, for a reversal or approval of our deeds. But in the recognition of our errors, we derive the consolation that Prudence may modify our comforts, and extend the limited capacity for enjoyment. In one of our sullen moods, a few days since, we undertook to censure our stomach for refusing a lobster sallad, when she replied with tears in her eyes, that she had faithfully served us for fifty years—that she had submitted to the vile concoctions we had poured into her during that time—that we had stuffed her with meats roasted to cinder or boiled to rags—with chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys, &c., half cooked, and seasoned with pepper, mustard, cloves, cinnamon, nutmegs, mace, and ginger, to cover their deformities—with puddings, pies, and all the variety of stews, fruits, and liquids, and now, after enduring this labor and fatigue for so many years, to encounter our censure for a lobster sallad, was too bad, and positively beyond endurance. Here she paused and sobbed aloud; but after discovering by the countenance, that we realized the justice of the complaint, she pensively resumed, and said, “if you had prudently guarded your mind against the sudden bursts of passion to which you are subject—if you had been cautious of the manner in which your meals had been cooked—had been careful in selecting but a small portion of each dish before you—had avoided every thing like spices, which destroy the sap of life, and had looked to your cooks and understood that they actually knew the difference between a spade and a stew-pan, I might

now be able to perform my duty with satisfaction to yourself. It is the excesses that are most to be complained of; and since we are now upon the subject, I must request that you avoid, hereafter, excessive passion, excessive thinking, excessive drinking, and, above all, excessive eating. Let your mind be as free as possible from care—your food be well selected and well cooked—let your sauces be the essence of the vegetable, instead of the fat of the hog, and I will engage you many comforts, many social dinners, and perhaps many years to enjoy them.

With this well digested and seasonable admonition we formed our resolution, and determined to look into the authorities for corroborating facts and circumstances. Bulwer, who is now in the harness of the dyspeptic, and somewhat chafed with the weight of a broken constitution, has discovered that *amusement* is the most essential mode of preserving health. He says, "It keeps the mind cheerful and contented—it engenders a spirit of urbanity—it removes the sense of hardship, and brings men together in those genial moments when the heart opens and care is forgotten." Walker also says, "In all our actions, whether with reference to business or pleasure, it is a main point to produce a suitable disposition, and that contentment should be the accompaniment of every meal." He further says, "the legitimate objects of dinner are to refresh the body, to please the palate, and to raise the social humor to the highest point." And Armstrong says, the man

Who never fasts, no banquet ever enjoys,  
Who never toils, or watches, never sleeps;  
Let nature rest; and when the taste of joy  
Grows keen, indulge, but shun satiety.

It is only then, according to this authority, that the bad passions of men turn to curses the choicest blessings of Heaven. The quailing virtue of the few is in eternal fear of the many, and when we cannot withstand the temptations to gluttony, we charge our weakness to the general depravity. But further inquiry enables us to say, that the injury from eating is more from the quantity—from bad cooking, and from the manner in which it is thrown into the stomach—than from the quality of the articles. Very often a simple aliment is made indigestible by artificial cookery, and those dishes abounding in fat are unwholesome, because fat resists the operation of the gastric juice. Then "some people," says Walker, "swallow their food in lumps, washing it down with large and frequent gulps of liquid—an affront to the stomach, which it is sure to resent with all the evils of indigestion, as it is impossible for the gastric juice to act, especially if the body is under the influence of motion. Mastication is good in two ways; first to break the food into small pieces, upon which the gastric juice can act, and second, to mix it with the saliva, which is the great facilitator of digestion." He further says, "being in health it is easy to keep so, at least, where there are facilities of living rationally—my care is neither to anticipate my appetite, nor to overload it, nor disappoint it—in fact, to keep it in the best possible humor—content the stomach, and the stomach will content you, and

every man should command his passions, instead of obeying them." But it is only for each man to examine himself, and inquire how much pleasure he has derived from the rational enjoyments of life, and how little from stupid indulgence. From the same disinterested and intelligent source, he may also learn, if a dyspeptic, whether ignorance of cooking, stubbornness of opinion, and perseverance in resisting the rational amusements of others, have not been the cause of his shattered constitution.

But it is only in the countries where the inhabitants are blind, that the man with one eye is considered a king, and in this country, when a man becomes dyspeptic, that he is qualified to teach others the art of preserving health. It is also said by Shakspeare, "that the best of men are moulded out of faults," and by Bulwer, "that having been once bad, they are the more fitted to discuss the elements of virtue"—so we, upon the principle of experience, having been a little nipped by imprudence, presume to preach the advantages of a scientific cook, and to say, without hesitation, that the world, in matters relating to eating, is governed by circumstances and ignorance.

Of the 50,000 lbs. of beef we annually consume, there is at least one half taken by persons who find it cheap, and because it is always ready and can be obtained at the shortest notice. At our ordinary, or *table d' hote*, which is furnished with all the variety of the market, the beef-eaters are few, not exceeding one in ten, and consequently the taste runs upon that which is not so readily obtained at home. Fish, fricandeaus, sweetbreads, mutton-chops, ducks, chickens, turkeys, geese, lobsters, &c., dressed in all the variety of the culinary art, present delicacies that are not often enjoyed by the "plain livers." But with the beef-eaters, from the gourmand to the plough boy, the palates are exceedingly various, and each adheres with firmness to the mode of cooking in which their taste has been schooled. For some the steak must be only heated, that the blood from its infinitesimal pores may squirt against the cheeks and roof of the mouth when pressed between the grinders. Others, in defiance of all the writers upon aliments, must have it so roasted, and so burnt to a cinder, that the digestive process of a millstone would not reduce it to a suitable condition for the stomach—others again, and we are happy to say the majority of beef eaters are of the same congenial taste, go for a medium, and direct their orders to be properly cooked—"none of your second chucks, or necks, but a tender loin, just cooked, and no more"—and in this, they come up to the instruction of the most eminent authors upon the subject of aliments. "Our food must be done," says Kitchener, "either by the cook, or by our stomach, before digestion takes place"—and Dr. Physick has often said, "the more it is done, the longer it will last."

Of the mutton eaters we have nearly the same variety of tastes, and about the same difficulty of pleasing their palates. The majority, however, are those who are about making the discovery that their stomachs require nursing, and boiled mutton instead of Brandreth's Pills is selected as the most delicate food. But for those whose in-



tellectual qualities are yet in the blossom, we have 172 ways of suiting their appetites, and of course can gratify the taste of the most delicate, or of the most voracious eater; but we cannot say we can protect the stomach of the *careless*, the *over* or the *underdone* eaters. For those, the stews and compounds of "the Plain Cook," are just as good as the science of Carême. 'The *cotelettes, d'Agneau, panées au jus—sauce tomate—à la purée de pois—à la Macédoine—à la Toulouse—à la financière—aux champignons—aux truffes*, are of course beyond the care or comprehension of those who expect their stomachs to do the work of the cook. In the preparation of these delicate dishes, we find our sauce-pans corrode, and yield to the "mutability of human affairs;" and if it should be discovered by those who make *spits* and *sauce-pans* of their stomachs, that they are subject to the same contingency, it is no affair of ours. The copper-smith can relieve us from the difficulty; but who, among the artisans, can restore the lost tone of the stomach? But as mankind were left to the freedom of their own will, and of course, on this subject, will do as they please, it is vain to preach doctrines of reform to minds that are matured in ignorance or error; or attempt to convince the disciples of hogs-lard, that what is sauce for the goose, *is not* sauce for the gander. The essence of the vegetable with the *flavor* of some aromatical plant, or stomachical spice, as Carême calls them, is not in the vocabulary of the "Plain Cook," nor can they reach the minds of those who bolt and devour every article placed before them. It is only by the influence of grease that the ship "slides to her *native* element," and without the aid of this unctuous auxiliary, how could a wood-cock pass unscathed to the gulf "from whence there is no return." The excesses of our youth are consequently drafts upon our old age, and as they are payable "without defalcation," it is the business of the prudent to know whether they can be met at maturity. A dyspeptic at our elbow says, the interest is compound, and if not settled on demand, he knows the body is held as security.

The tastes, however, arising from the inquisitorial or fickle disposition of the *nose*, or rather the *noses* and *palates* of the multitude, are not confined to the slops of the "Plain Cook." Some of them have been regulated by experience, and actually know the difference between calf's-head and soused tripe. But we have others that prefer "pepper pot, all hot," to the pure, unadulterated soup of the turtle. The majority, however, turn up that emunctuary prominence at what they call "French stews," and bring it back to its original standing, at a canvass-back duck, fried in butter. Such being the taste, we sometimes come to the conclusion, that the world is not to be reformed by experience—that this moral instructor, like a great many others whose business it is to collect and present the crying evils to our mind, lets the blind batter their heads against the wall, because it is not his business to interfere. We, likewise, have a growing inclination to believe that

"Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise,"

and if one man, as it frequently happens, should prefer soup and milk, fish and milk, and lobster salad, with "a glass of good cool milk," to

wash it down, it is our business to furnish it. The passions of men must be gratified, and it is the business of the moralist, not ours, to keep them in tune. We have said before that the engineer is alone responsible for the care of the engine, and not the man who supplies the fuel.

But as it is only in the humility of the ripened ear, that experience presumes to show her talent, and not in the exuberant fancies of youth, we shall close this article with the request that our friends look to the capacity and qualifications of their cooks—that they will see that the material upon which they exist is not only good, but *well cooked*, before they permit it to reach their stomachs. The secret of rejuvenescence, if ever discovered, we believe will be found in the kitchen.

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### CHAPTER III.

“Twixt health and riot draw the line,  
And teach us how—and when to dine.”

To “masticate, denticate, chump, grind and swallow,” is the judicious motto of the gourmand, and as the dinner of which we are about to give the description, was ordered and eaten by gentlemen who were familiar with the science of the cook, and the advantages to be derived from a strict adherence to the principles laid down in the motto, we have determined, “for the benefit of the rising generation” of course, to give a history of what transpired on the occasion. The difficulty, however, that presents itself is the power of condensation, and the utter impossibility of recollecting all the good things that were said, or ought to have been said at the time. The mind that is fixed upon the enjoyment of any object is selfish, and in most cases reserves to itself all that is exquisite or intellectual; but here the pleasure was divided, and a mutual harmony prevailed. The wit that had been smothered by care, in the brilliant flashes with which it was surrounded, soon burst from its spell-bound prison, and radiated alike to the happiness of others. But to preserve and describe the scene is the difficulty, and requires a pen like a well tuned fiddle. It should, in the hands of the performer, discourse freely, and send out beauties that are lost in the emergency; and he who attempts the relation, must not only supply the omissions, but must execute the graces that accompany the performance. In the detail then, we shall stick to facts, though Bulwer says, “that *they*, like stones, are nothing in themselves, their value consists only in the manner in which they are put together.” But being upon the subject of cooking and eating, and professing to be yet ignorant of the science, “we’ll try our ‘prenticed hand” in the concoction of a dish that may be palatable to some who have enjoyed, and know how to appreciate the good things of this life.

The dinner, then, was *fixed*, as we say in America, for the 18th of February, just six months since, and just when the stomach of the

intellectual world had been liberated from the turkey of the holidays; and when the science of the cook was put in requisition to supply the deficiency of the market. Nature, it is said, is always bountiful; but some writers are of the opinion that she withholds many of these delicacies for her own use, at this particular season, and consequently, in the progress of the dinner, we shall show how admirably the deficiency was supplied.

By previous arrangement the dinner was on the table at 5 o'clock, and as it is the universal law of the gourmand, never to anticipate the host, the party were on the spot as the clock finished its admonitory token. The doors were then thrown open, which exposed to the view a round table, with a beautiful bouquet of flowers gracing the centre, and the exact number of chairs for the party. On the table were placed the plates, the glasses, and the napkins folded in whimsical variety, and the sideboards covered with pastry, confectionery, &c. After appointing from the number a master of ceremonies, or, as we say in the newspapers, a president, the seats were filled and the health of each pledged in a glass of Madeira. The napkins were then removed from their position, the bill of fare placed before the guest, and a tureen of

### *Potage à la Crêcy*

set before the master of ceremonies. During the discussion of this most excellent dish—the essence of the vegetable—we were regaled by one of the company with a review of some of the leading soups, and their effect upon the stomach; and after refusing a second portion, which was demanded, upon the ground that it would destroy the appetite, which was now in a situation to appreciate what was to follow, the table was cleared and a few bottles of hock and claret placed before us. Then a

### *Rockfish à la Champénoise,*

with shell-fish in all the variety of the cuisine, immediately followed. After the ceremony of helping and being helped, the conversation became sprightly, gay, uninterrupted, and without aim; sometimes philosophical, without inclining to the crudities or sinking to the abstracts that interfere with the general harmony. Moral and metaphysical subjects were alike touched upon, but the master of ceremonies, fearing the tendency towards “the grave,” and knowing that the object was enjoyment, and to test the qualifications of the cook, proposed that each person present should select a dish, and, during the interval between the courses, give his views to the company. This proposition having met with the approbation of the company, it fell of course to the proposer to make the beginning.

The fish, of which by this time each one present had a bit in his mouth, and of course was enabled to appreciate the subject, was selected; and having satisfied himself that the cook, at least, was in his element, he began by thanking the sea for the supply bestowed upon all nations, and at all seasons of the year. He hoped also, that each of the party would recollect, in his prayers, to thank God for



the infinite variety, and particularly for the rock-fish—the shad—the sheep's-head—the trout, and the salmon. He said there were many others that deserved the special prayers of the epicure; but without going into a history, or enumerating the variety upon which the poor of the country subsist, or that the more fortunate regard as a luxury, he would briefly say, that notwithstanding our gratitude for the abundant supply of every thing in nature, we were greatly indebted to our cook for the present gratification of our palates. To make our ships, to build our houses, or to construct our rail-ways, the science of the architect and engineer is called in requisition. To direct us in the pursuit of the learned professions, we have digests for the lawyers, we have commentaries for the clergy; we have, besides, chemical analyses and scientific experiments, volumes of reports for the physicians; and we have Adams to teach us the typographic art. We have, also, lecturers upon every science, and teachers for every branch of industry. Besides, we have newspapers to teach us our political creeds; and we have apothecaries, with their diplomas setting forth their knowledge of the *materia medica*, and of their ability to compound the doses that are necessary to kill or cure us. But who have we got for our cooks, and where is the science that enables us to protect our bodies from the various diseases to which we are subject? The ignorance which prevails over the domestic arrangements of the country, is the reason why our medical schools are so liberally and so scientifically endowed. When the protection of our health is placed in the hands of one of "God's Ebony Images," or perhaps an emigrant from the bogs of the Green Isle, is it any wonder why chemistry should be employed only in the concoction of drugs, or that the most abstruse science should be exhausted in the education of our physicians. To the charge "that we are a vain and selfish people," the selection of our cooks, except in this case, throws back the slander, and most emphatically proves that we cannot be vain of what we take so little pains to preserve.

A cook, however, who understands his business, is another affair. One that possesses a sound mind—a robust constitution—a good temper—a perfect knowledge of agriculture, of chemistry, of the fine arts generally, and of a mind capable of conceiving, combining, and of estimating the productions of nature—with a knowledge of the human constitution, and can adapt the animal and vegetable kingdom to the preservation and to the various tastes of his fellow men, is a phenomenon beyond the comprehension of modern epicures, and only exists in the minds of the gourmands. To put into operation the salt, pepper, oil, vinegar and honey, requires talent, and a mind that can look into the various properties, and adapt them to our use. Separately, we know these articles are poison to the human family; conjointly, with other matter, they are nutritive, savory and indispensable to our existence; and yet, who among the whole race of cooks has given the subject a thought? The adjuncts which the science of the cook is necessary to bring into use, are eggs, cheese, raisins, benzoin, parsley, carmine, capers, water-cresses,

fennel, mint, coriander, currants, garlic, onions, and all the aromatic herbs. With these forces he is enabled to combat ignorance and prejudice, and establish with the scientific and the learned the proper character of his art. We all know that it is in the combination that power is given to machinery, and in matters relating to the palate, it is only by the same judicious arrangement that the several tastes can be gratified. The fish that now lies before us, or that which has partly "gone the way of all flesh," is the illustration of a well balanced mind. It is not floating in the "sauce of the goose," nor is it presented in the habiliments of the summer. The rich and fragrant sauce—the purée of the vegetable—the appropriate and well conceived embellishments, that bring down your haughty and imperious palates to the recognition of its virtues, are in correspondence with the season, and not the offspring of chance or the mere adaptation of rules. Your *eye* tells you it is artistical, and in exact conformity with the sovereign rules of *taste*. Your *nose* is not turned up at the indigestible flavor of hog's lard or rancid butter. Your *palate*, without regarding the delicacies that are yet in store, has anticipated the approbation of the stomach by a liberal contribution, and your stomach has ratified the judgments of its sentinels by further drafts upon their liberality. Thus our cook has exhibited in this performance the science of his profession, and proven that we have at least one among us that is master of his business. Carême, in answer to the question, what cooks had to do with the science of chemistry?—answered, "ought I not to know those herbs which in each season have the most sap and virtue? Are not certain articles of food easier of digestion at certain seasons? and is it not owing to the preference that is shown to the one over the other, that proceed the greater part of the diseases that afflict us?" Hippocrates has also said, "that nothing is so essential to health as the *choice of food*. It depends first upon the nature of the climate—on the variations of the air and seasons—on the difference of temperament and age; also, on the properties more or less nutritive, and observed in the several kinds of meats, fish, vegetables and fruits. For instance, the flesh of beef is strong and difficult to digest; that of veal\* much more so; so, also, is that of lamb lighter than that of the sheep, and that of the kid lighter than that of the goat. The flesh of hogs, as well as that of wild boar, dries up, but it strengthens and passes off easily. The sucking pig is heavy; the flesh of hare is dry and astringent. In general, flesh is found to be less succulent in wild animals than in tame ones—in those that feed on fruits than those that feed on herbs—in males than in females—in blacks than in whites—in those that are hairy than those that are not. But the flesh of fish is in the greatest perfection at the period of the ripening of the milt and roe. It is then in season, and most abounds in the rich and oily matter that gives it its delicious flavor. After the spawn is deposited the flesh becomes soft, flabby and inferior in flavor, owing to the disappearance of the oil or fat which has been con-

\* Depending upon the cook. Though Beaumont says, "veal proved less digestible than beef."

sumed in the function of reproduction." The digestibility, however, of fish, varies considerably in the different species. Pereira tells us, "that the oily fishes are always more difficult of digestion, and in consequence are unfit for the use of invalids. Melted butter, lobster sauce, shrimp sauce and egg sauce are very indigestible additions to fish; they are exceedingly obnoxious to the stomach, and should be excluded from the table of the invalid." Dr. Beaumont says, "that fresh trout and salmon, boiled or fried, takes one hour and thirty minutes for digestion; codfish, boiled, two hours: flounders, fresh, fried, three hours and thirty minutes; codfish, the same, and salted salmon, four hours." But the chemical analysis collected and given by Pereira, will satisfy all who are curious, or wish to be informed upon the subject, of the inferior nutritive power of the fish. Lobsters, crabs and shrimps are much esteemed by the epicure, but as they are indigestible, they should be particularly avoided by the dyspeptic. Oysters hold the most distinguished place among the heads of this class; but according to Beaumont they require from two hours fifty-five minutes to three hours and thirty minutes for digestion. They agree very well with strong stomachs, but Dr. Pearson says, "by no means so with persons who are subject to indigestion; and dyspeptics, and gouty persons, who have ventured to swallow them in a raw state, have often been disordered by them."

But here the time allotted had expired, and the indications for a third course, with the necessity for "wetting the whistle," admonished our friend to cut short the relation in which he had become so animated, and to us so interesting, for the purpose of proceeding with our business.

Sparkling hock and champagne were then added to the beverage, and immediately after the

*Ris de Veau, à la St. Cloud, aux petit pois.*

The vegetables, as before, were all fresh and in variety, suited to the dish before us—the whole gradually approaching the solids indicated by the bill, and perhaps necessary for the stomach, which as yet was but whetted and prepared for what was coming. During the *discussion* of this dish, the conversation was confined to questions that grew out of the matter so ably set forth by our moderator, but after it had disappeared it was determined that the friend on the left should occupy the ground, as he was known to be familiar with the science of the gastronome, and most particularly acquainted with the mode of eating and enjoying a dinner. He, without apology or preliminary remark, said, as his friend who pretended to amuse us with the history of the fish had fled from the subject, and left the fish to swim in their element; had taken up the subject of cooks and cooking, and had left him so little to work upon, he supposed he must take the fowls of the air, and if possible fly into a topic that might entertain the company. But the wings of the imagination, without resorting to those of the goose, are sometimes and in some hands sufficient to elevate the subject; and as the object to-night was



to taste the realities of life, he would not soar into ethereal space, or carry his hearers beyond the delicacies with which the country abounds. The turkey, which is called the king of the barn-yard, is the solace of the rich and the comfort of the poor. It is the same in the poor man's cabin that it is in the palace of the president, and whether we regard it roasting on the string, on the spit, or in the bake-oven, it is a bird that gives more consolation than any of the feathered tribe. Who has not witnessed the happy influence of a turkey in the settlement of family broils, or upon a Christmas day observed by the patriarch, with his numerous progeny, seated at the social board, recounting his youthful exploits—the roast turkey, fed, fattened and cooked by the aged mother, who is seated at the foot of the table, with eyes turning with gratitude to God for the privilege of again contributing to the happiness of her offspring? To the countryman such scenes are familiar, and to the citizen few will recollect the social harmony of a family dinner without the cheering influence of a roast turkey. But the goose is among the luxuries of the table, and although we are indebted to her for many of the substantial comforts of life, and notwithstanding the assertion of Dr. Starke, that she produces more vigor to the body and mind than the turkey, is nothing but a goose, and sometimes destroys the *harmony* of friends, at least in the neighborhood of her gambols. Shakspeare says,

The crow doth *sing* as sweetly as the lark,  
When neither is attended;  
But if the nightingale were to sing by day,  
When every *goose* is *cackling*,  
She'd be thought no better a musician than the wren.

Besides, the Irishman thinks "she's an inconvenient bird—she's not enough for two, but a little too much for one"—and consequently not entitled to the indiscriminate praise bestowed upon the turkey. Our private opinion is, that she's a delicate dish, and in the hands of a skillful cook, may not be unworthy the nicest appreciation of the epicure. The same sauce will sometimes do for the gander.

But as you are all familiar with the produce of the barn-yard, it is not necessary to enumerate, or give the history of the several excellent dishes that are every day presented from the stock of the farmer. The chicken, of which the vocabulary of the cook presents so many delicate dishes, is not to be passed in silence; nor is the capon, the emasculated sovereign of the dunghill, to be despised for his effeminate qualities. The aldermen, by common consent, are fed upon turtle, in the hope, it is said, that their nature may assimilate, and enable them to snap at, and punish for their crimes, the vicious portion of our race; but the capon, the dear delicious capon, is quite another affair, and should be kept for the exclusive use of the parson. The fierce and masculine powers of the sinner can only be subdued by the mild and docile conduct of the saint.

"If *they* be *fowl* on whom the people trust,  
Well may the *baser brass* contract the rust."

The forest, next, produces its share to our comfort, and who among you have not enjoyed the luxuries it provides for our table?

Only look, through your mind's eye, at the catalogue, and from the extended list select the numerous luxuries that each season presents. The winter, the spring, the summer, and the autumn, spread out before us their extensive stock, and seem to invite an unlimited enjoyment. But of all the luxuries bestowed upon man, the *canvass-back duck* stands out in bold relief from the rest of the feathered tribe. Seatsfield says, "had Lucullus known of it, he would have deprived Columbus of the honor of the discovery of our part of the world. No European imperial table can boast a dish so tender, so aromatic and so juicy; the meat really melts on your tongue, and the fat runs over your lips do what you will; it is a genuine gastro-nomic feast." Featherstonhaugh, with all his excessive loyalty and affection for the land that gave him birth, says, "it is an exemplary bird, which seems to take—*sua sponte*—the most indefatigable pains to qualify himself for a favorable reception in the best society; for in the first instance he makes himself exceedingly fat by resorting to the low marshy lands of the Susquehanna, to feed upon the ripe seed of the *zizania aquatica*, a sort of wild rice which abounds there; and then, at a proper season, betakes himself to an esculent root growing in the sedgy banks of the river, to give the last finish to the tenderness, the juiciness, and the delicate flavor which distinguishes him *above all other birds* when brought to table. But justice must be done to him by an abler artist, or great as his intrinsic qualities are, he may be reduced to a condition that entitles him even to be pitied by the humble scavenger duck.

"I had heard a great deal of this inestimable bird, before it was presented to me under the auspices of Barnum, and was somewhat surprised and disappointed, at seeing him place on the table, with great solemnity, a couple of birds on a dish without a single drop of gravy in it. Now every one knows that a quantum suff. of good gravy is to English rôtis what fine sunny weather is to the incidents of life, enabling them to pass along smoothly and pleasantly; and, therefore, as soon as I had a little recovered from my alarm, I could not help telling Barnum, that I was afraid I should not like his canvass-back. Upon which, asking our permission, he took up the carving knife, and making two incisions in the fat breast of the birds, the dish instantly became *filled* with the desired fluid. Had I not seen this, I could not have believed it! Then came the action of the *réchauffoirs*, the dismemberment of the birds, scarcely warmed through at the fire, the transference of their delicate flesh to our hot plates, and its reconcoction in their own gravy, with currant jelly, a soupçon of château margeau, and a small quantity of fine loaf sugar. We were three of us to these two birds, and the great Barnum had the satisfaction of hearing us declare, that the only defect they had, consisted in their not being of the size of turkeys."

William Penn, also, in one of his letters says, "There are plenty of ducks in the Delaware; some very delicious when cooked with a little berry called *cranberry*."

But the high admiration of these gentlemen is not equal to the classic, the lamb-like description of Buckstone. His eulogium of the canvass-back duck, in his journey to the South, is certainly

equal to the roast-pig of Elio, and we regret we cannot give it from memory. Wilson, however, in his Ornithology, says, "the canvass-back, in the rich, juicy, tenderness of its flesh, and its delicacy of flavor, stands unrivalled by the whole of its tribe, in this, or perhaps any other part of the world. At our public dinners, hotels, and particular entertainments, the canvass-backs are universal favorites." We have also the permission of one of our most celebrated novelists, to say that he always pays them (the canvass-backs) the greatest respect, by eating all he can get. But it is not to the Tourist, to the Ornithologist, or to the Novelist, that this delicious bird is indebted for its fame, nor is it through this channel alone, that its name is to reach posterity. Joel Barlow has sung its praises in his Columbiad, and many of the more recent if not more meritorious Poets have carried it upon the wings of their imaginations to the highest pinnacle of fame, and, if not cut short by Father Miller, many ages will pass before they are forgotten. The plan of catching them, is also given in numbers, by the author of the Foresters, and we want only the delicate pen of Willis, to make the canvass-back one of the choicest of our national dishes. Indeed, it is the belief that this bird was especially intended by Providence as the proper food for the Presidents of this Republic. The place where they abound in the greatest perfection, being in close contiguity with the Capital, is strong evidence of the fact, and if we look at the age of the several venerated patriots that have filled the office—at the Republican simplicity with which the sceptre has been wielded—at the clear sight, and prudent forethought with which they have been enabled to view and resist the encroachments of our aristocratic neighbors, it must have been owing to the influence of the canvass-back duck upon the system. The fact, also, that our much respected and venerated incumbent has been rejuvenized, and taken to himself a young and beautiful wife, is an illustration of our position, and establishes, beyond a doubt, the efficacy of canvass-backs, and towards this Republic the peculiar intentions of Heaven. The governments of Europe, we all know, are obliged to protect the persons of their sovereigns, with a retinue, and an expense almost equal to the disbursements of our government. A cook to his august Majesty receives a salary nearly equal to our President; and yet, with all his skill, is unable to produce a single dish that will afford the nutriment of a canvass-back duck. A physician is alike compensated, and when we compare the ages of the parties, the Republican, without these appendages, outlives the most robust sovereign of the world. Then why is it so? Because, with a chafing-dish, a spoonful of claret, and a little currant jelly, he prepares the dinner that Providence has already cooked upon the wing. But we have other delicacies awaiting, and will conclude by a reference to the woodcock, the snipe and the reed-bird. As you have all enjoyed them in their excellence, and in their proper season, for—

"Each rolling month matures  
The food, that suits it most;—so does each clime,"

we will suspend our observations and discuss the

*Filet de Canetons, Celeri à la Crème, Sauce à l'Orange.*



This dish being the breasts of ducks, with orange and celery sauce, of course the appetite was not lessened by the history of the canvass-back ; nor was it destroyed by the sweetbreads that preceded. Some Madeira and Sherry being added to the stock of wines, a promiscuous conversation followed, and was kept up until the course was pretty well exhausted, when the next in turn commenced with a recital of his mode of living, during the last two years, and the effect it had upon his health. He said that previous to the establishment of the Restaurant in this city, it had been his custom to reside at the various hotels, until his health began to decline ; that he then changed to a boarding house, where the variety of dishes was less, and where he hoped to improve the constitution, that from some cause was beginning to sink. But here again he found the "plain cooking," as it was called, was too plain for his delicate organs of digestion. The roast meats were so roasted, and the boiled so boiled, that but little of a nutritive or digestive quality was left. Every thing else was alike deprived of its intrinsic quality ; and as Ninon said of Levigne's heart, "appeared to be fried in ice," and of course to a man in the first stages of dyspepsia, the prospect of a visit to Laurel Hill was among the immediate contingencies of the future. The Restaurant of the Franklin, however, presenting an alternative, the experiment was made, and "here I am," he exclaimed, rejuvenized, renovated, and, as you all know, have played my part, and done full justice to the many good things that have come under our inspection to-night."

He then detailed his mode of living, and was particularly emphatic upon the advantages of *choosing* his own time, and of *selecting* the dishes that were best suited to his stomach. He said, "That notwithstanding his habits and early education, he had now learned that it was easier to protect than to nurse a broken constitution, and that life could only be enjoyed by a strict adherence to a temperate use of the knife and fork."

"A drunkard," says Graham, "sometimes, though rarely, reaches old age—a glutton, never !" And Bulwer, who is suffering from the effects of careless eating, says—"I eat with too great a rapidity. It is a most unhappy failing ; for one often hurries over in *one minute*, what ought to have afforded the fullest delight for the period of *five*. It is indeed a vice which deadens enjoyment, as well as abbreviates it ; it is a shameful waste of gifts, and a melancholy perversion of the bounty of Providence. A Frenchman would obtain as much enjoyment from a mutton chop, as an Englishman or an American would derive from a sirloin of beef."

These admonitions, with the hints thrown out by Walker, "that being in health, it is easy to keep so, where there are facilities of living rationally," induced me "to seek only the food that the stomach asked for," and at all times "neither to anticipate my appetite—nor to overload it—nor disappoint it." But, he continued, we have writers without number against fast eating, and we have living evidences, victims to the custom, who emphatically proclaim against it. Abernethy, in his advice to the Yankee, said—"It's no wonder you lose your teeth, for you never use them—nor your digestion,

for your overload it—nor your saliva, for you expend it on the carpet, instead of your food. You Yankees load your stomachs as a Devonshire man does his cart, as full as it can hold, and as fast as he can pitch it in with a dung-fork, and drive off—and then you complain that such a load of compost is too heavy for you.”

But, he further remarked, “I have nothing of this to complain of. By a faithful adherence to the rule laid down, my health has improved, and whether the weather is hot or cold, wet or dry, I can procure what best agrees with my stomach. In this mode of living I am not subject to the fluctuating taste of my landlady—nor forced, like a good child, to quietly eat what is set before me; nor am I compelled to swallow the stews of an ignorant cook—but can eat when I please, what I please, and just as much or as little as I please.”

The next course was—

*Palais de Bœuf, à la Royale.*

After the ceremony of eating had progressed so far as to establish the reputation of this dish, the next gentleman in turn commenced his illustration of the subject by saying, that this is one of the “dainty dishes that’s set before the king.” The expense and difficulty of cooking is, perhaps, the reason why we republicans are not more familiar with its delicacy; and it is probably owing to the same reason why John Bull, who has so many *tongues* to proclaim its excellence, has not adopted it as a national dish. The vocabulary of the British cook is not extensive, and as the genius of the nation lies more in the enjoyment than in the invention of good dishes, we must conclude that there is some good reason for not finding its history in some of the Reviews. Every month brings us forth an essay on gastronomy; but they seldom contain any thing new, unless another version of the praises of Roast Beef may be considered among the *rare* objects of the day. But this dish, the Palates of Beef, is a French discovery; and as it is a principle of nature that two suns cannot shine in the same atmosphere, we may as well conclude that the British *palates* are inferior, and ought not to be named on the same day with the beef. We know that the English travellers in this country are much more dainty than those from any other part of the world; but when they become *civilized*, they are not backward in adopting our habits, and, like ourselves, boast a little of their national advantages.

The Roast Beef being, then, their national dish, we like the Englishmen the better for praising it; nor have we any particular objection to the abuse of ours, since it enables them to keep up their national character. We know our beef is good enough, and believe it to be equal to any in the world; but where it is so common, and so many things better, it is not expected that it will be rated as the choicest blessing of heaven. We therefore conclude that—

“The man who turnips *cries*,  
And cannot when his father dies—  
'Tis a proof that he would rather  
Have a turnip than his father.”

But to prove that we are not so far behind our illustrious ancestors in civilization—that it is not expected we should excel them in any thing but fighting and spitting—or that our roast beef is really not as bad as some people find it, we will bring in the evidence of Captain Marryat, and some of his illustrious co-workers, to prove that there is really some comfort to be found in our country. Seatsfield, however, among many good things, says, “I hate your mountains of roast beef, which oppress the stomach at first sight; and those mountains of hams and turkeys, swimming in fat, like whales in an unknown bay.” Miss Martineau was not able to get any good meat all the time she was in America; but she found “other things that were exceedingly good.” But Marryat contradicts this living example, and fair champion of British beef, and says, “that the meat in this country is equal to *the best* in England.” In “the game market of New York” he saw “three hundred head of deer! with *quantities* of bear, *racoons*, wild turkeys, geese, ducks, and every variety of bird, in countless profusion!!” “The bear,” he continues, “I abominate; the racoon is pretty good; the wild turkey is excellent; but the great delicacies in America are the terrapin and canvass-back duck.” Then, after enumerating the fish, oysters, turtle, &c., he says, “I think, after this statement, [*and we think so too,*] that the English will agree with me that there are *plenty of good things* for the table in America; but the old proverb says, ‘God sends meats, and the devil sends cooks,’ and consequently every thing is spoiled before it comes to the table.” But he found fine cooking at the Astor House, and by way of illustration fills several pages with a bill of fare. At Delmonico’s, he had many “*recherché* dinners.” Yet, notwithstanding this elegant cooking—the “300 deer in the market—the turkeys, the *coons*, and the bears,” he says, “the Americans are the grossest feeders of any civilized nation known. As a nation, their food is heavy, coarse, and indigestible, while it is taken in the least artificial forms that cookery will allow. The *predominance of grease* in the American kitchen, coupled with the habit of hearty eating, and of constant *expectoration*, are the sources of the diseases of the stomach, which are so common in America.” This evidence, however, of our good beef—of our great abundance—of our bad cooking—of our drinking mint-juleps—of our spitting—and of the pigs biting the tails off each other in the West, is corroborated by Buckstone, Capt. Hall, Mrs. Trollop, and the voracious Mr. Dickens. But, although we have many imperfections, and with tears in our eyes acknowledge that we are not as perfect as we might be, nor have we reached that maturity of mind or judgment that would distinguish us beyond the most intelligent or luxuriant nation of the earth, we know we have many virtues which we derive from ourselves, and many vices which we inherit from our ancestors; but having reached the fourth or fifth generation, as it is said elsewhere, we hope to eradicate many of the crying evils that now afflict us. But we console ourselves that we are descended from the same stock of illustrious ancestors—that many of our follies are our only inheritance, or derived from the example of those *chif-*



*foniers* who occasionally honor us with a visit—that we are yet without those institutions that secure to the fool his importance, or to the obsequious a standard of excellence, and consequently it is believed the nation will survive the odium that is thus cast upon us, and we have only to express our gratification that these “graduates of Oxford” found *beef* enough to sustain them while with us. The many excellent dinners that were eaten by Marryat, and the delicate attentions that were bestowed upon Dickens, might have conveyed to the minds of those gentlemen that “*human natur*” in this country is somewhat diversified, and from experience they might have understood that the choicest delicacies are not in any country found in the *swill-tub*. Dickens tells us that the only impertinent people he found were his own countrymen; but although this is said with a great deal of gravity, we are unwilling to believe that the epithet is characteristic of his nation. Among our acquaintance we have many Englishmen, whom we regard as ornaments to our society, and consequently are unwilling to believe that his spectacles are adjusted to the proper focus. His knowledge of *beef*, at times, is more acute than his knowledge of the several passions that govern the human family; and, therefore, while we admit our imperfections—our bad habits of spitting, and our ignorance of eating and cooking, we cannot regard them as our national sin, nor can we believe that our great mother England, in these matters, is entirely free from reproach. On the subject of cooking, however, Voltaire has said that the English have twenty religions and but one sauce; and as Dr. Johnson has told us “that it is not worth while to thank God for a dinner that was badly cooked,” it follows that some reason has been given for complaint. The inference that we are consequently compelled to make is, that the book-making travelers have not *dressed* our countrymen in the style of an *artiste*—that the *roast beef* part of their dishes is a little too *rare*—or, as Horace Walpole said of the Duke of Newcastle, “a little too beefy;” and that their seasoning is not according to Carême, nor have they followed in their compositions the instructions of the *Cuisine*. Pliny says, “salt” (Attic, if you choose,) “is the most precious of seasoning. It excites appetite, assists transpiration and digestion, and corrects the tendency to sourness of animal and vegetable substances, and improves their insipid and tasteless flavor, rendering them savory and agreeable to the palate. *The good cook* uses it with skill—the *indifferent* employs it without taste, and betrays his mediocrity by salting too little or too much.”

But what is the opinion of other nations—of other travellers, in relation to the cooking and eating department of England? In their literature we have many complaints of their want of refinement, and but one to proclaim—

“Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us,  
To see oursel’s as others see us.”

Von Raumer, a German writer of great celebrity, says, “the English cookery is that of nature, as described by Homer. Good quality

of provisions is the basis and indispensable condition of good eating; therefore, without good fish, good meat, good vegetables, labor and art are thrown away; and, because the English have all those, they fancy that their object is attained. In this, however, they appear to be mistaken, for they want the second step in the progress of the art, or the scientific and tasteful combinations of nature and art. Thus we see every day, and in every company, *one and the same sauce for fish*. Every vegetable appears *in puris naturalibus*—every soup seeks to hide its weakness by a covering of pepper and spice. With the same materials the French cook can do a great deal more. As the Egyptian divinities, in simple dignified repose, appear with their arms and legs closely pinioned in the same position, and with the same expression in all ages, so do in England, in dull and unvarying monotony, roast beef, roast mutton, roast veal. As every god and goddess assumes in the hands of Phidias and Praxiteles a different posture and feature, a milder or more serious expression, so do the sheep, the oxen and the calves in the hands of the French cook; and the monotonous genus of plants in the system of Linnæus or Jussieu is broken by the horticultural skill of these artists, into the most pleasing varieties. Art, indeed, goes beyond its limits, if it loses sight of its destination, if the roast is treated à la Bernéni, the vegetables à la Hollandaise. In this case we feel that it has degenerated, and long for the simplicity of nature. The Germans in this, as in many other things, aim at a medium between the two extremes at improving rude nature, and simplifying over-refined art. The will is good, Heaven grant that the end may be attained, namely, the production of a dinner combining the excellencies of nature and art." In another place he says, "I make a transition to various complaints, concerning seats too narrow and neighbors too wide—soup nearly all water, and beef boiled to rags." At a dinner for the relief of decayed actors, the tables were so narrow and so crowded with dishes, that it appeared as if the eating must have lasted for many hours; but no sooner was the signal for attack given, than a furious charge was made—one took soup, another fish, another flesh, and so on. A universal slaughter of the viands was thus effected in a very short space of time, and singing and speaking began. All this was accompanied and interrupted by marks of approbation, expressed by voices, sticks, feet, knives, forks, glasses, &c., in such a fashion that our *fortissimo* would be a mere gentle murmur to it."

With these observations he concluded, and, after drinking to the memory of the man who discovered roast beef, the table was again covered with

#### *Cotelettes de Pigeons, Sauce aux Champignons,*

and its accompaniments. But here, like Procrustes, we must cut the subject to suit the dimensions of our *bed*, and hereafter, for the benefit of our dyspeptic friends, we may resume, and bring in the *capon* and the *desert*.

